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XII.—*On the Skin, the Hair, and the Eyes, as Tests of the Races of Man.* By JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq., F.R.S.

[*Read April 23rd, 1867.*]

THE skin, hair, and eyes, taken either separately or conjointly, form but a very inadequate and ambiguous test of the races of man, seeing that some of them are, in reality, common to several races in all other respects widely different. Many of the species of the lower animals in the wild state are distinguishable by the mere colouring and texture of the pelt or hairy covering of the skin; but we have no such assured characteristics to rely upon with the races of man. Comparing the effects of colour as a test of race between man and the lower animals, it will appear that in man it is exhibited only in the naked skin, which is essentially the same in all mankind; whereas, with the lower, it is expressed through the more definite and distinct media of hair, fur, down, and feathers.

To begin with the complexion or colour of the skin, which, in so far as the integuments are concerned, is the most conspicuous distinction of race. It is white of many shades in Europe, including the neighbouring portion of Western Asia, or what may be called ethnological Europe. We have no evidence, and no ground to believe, that a black or brown native race ever existed in Europe, or a native white race in any other part of the world.

The prevailing colour of the races of man of Africa and its islands is black, and the only exceptions are the Egyptians and the Mauritians or Berbers at the extreme northern, and the Hottentots and Bushmen at the extreme southern, limit of the continent—the two first being of a brown or tawny, and the last of a muddy yellow colour.

In Western Asia, after leaving the white race, the prevailing complexion is a light brown, as in the example of the Persians, Arabs, and Turks. The only native black race of continental Asia is the Hindu, and this with various shades extends from Ceylon to the Himalaya mountains, and from the Indus to the Ganges; neither latitude nor elevation of land making any appreciable difference, for the Hindus of the Punjab are as dark as the Hindus of Cape Comorin. Between India and China, the continent of Asia is inhabited by a race of dark brown complexion, including the Burmese, the Siamese, the

Cambojans, the Anamese, with many minor tribes, who all agree in this attribute.

To the east of the country of the Hindu-Chinese, the race just referred to, the complexion is a brownish-yellow, and this includes all the inhabitants of China, of nearly the whole Japanese Archipelago, of Corea, and of most of the nations and tribes of Tartary.

The prevailing colour of the races of the Malayan and Philippine Archipelagoes, and of the islands of the North and South Pacific, is brown; but here we have black races also, as in the Negritos of the Malayan Peninsula, and those of several of the Philippine Islands, in the Papuans of New Guinea, and in the various Austral Negroes of the Pacific, extending from New Guinea all the way to the Fiji Islands, but which at this last point ceases entirely, nor does the black colour appear at all to the northward of the equator.

On the continent of Australia—including Tasmania, the only considerable island annexed to it—the sole colour of its inhabitants is black. No native white or brown race is ever known to have existed on it.

The universal complexion of the people of America and its islands, until at the northern extremity of the continent we come to the Esquimaux, whose colour is nearly the same as that of the Chinese, is a reddish-brown colour, often likened to that of copper. No black, or white, or light brown native race has ever, that we have any record of, existed in America or its islands.

In each of the colours that I have ascribed to the different races of man there are many shades, which it is wholly impossible to distinguish by any definite and intelligible words, and I have, therefore, made no attempt to do so.

As to the hair of the head, of the face, and of some other portions of the person, in so far as colour is concerned, it usually follows that of the skin. Man, it may be observed, is the only land mammal with whom the hair appears only partially here and there, as if for mere ornament, while with the lower animals it is distributed over the whole body, forming a covering indispensable to their existence, man being left to clothe himself, as a necessary exercise for his ingenuity.

Variety of colour in the hair is a distinguishing characteristic of the races of ethnological Europe, and rarely belongs to others of the races of man. With the man of Europe we have it of every shade of colour, from flaxen fair to crow black. Thus, we have golden yellow (the *Rutila coma* of Latin writers), yellow, red, pale red, auburn, chestnut, and brown of several shades. The children of the same father and mother will often

afford examples of several of these varieties. In texture, the quality of the hair of the head in the European race is generally fine, soft, and silky, and curls or buckles.

With all the races of man besides the European, the prevailing colour of the hair is an uniform black. This applies, with some exceptions, to the Persians, the Arabs, and the Syrians. It is invariably so with the Hindus, the Hindu-Chinese, the Chinese, the Japanese, the races of Tartary, the Malays, the races of the Pacific islands, whether black or brown complexioned,—of Australia, of America, whether red men or Esquimaux, and of all Negroes, whether occidental or oriental.

With the races now enumerated, however, there is in some cases a very wide difference in the texture or quality of the hair. With the Hindu, the Hindu-Chinese, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Malays, the Mongols, and other races of Tartary, with the fairer races of the South Sea Islands, and with the two races of America, the hair of the head is black, lank, and coarse, and this without any material or appreciable difference of quality. With the African Negro, the hair of the head is short, crisp, partakes of the texture of sheep's wool, and covers the whole scalp. With the Papuan Negro, and the Negroes of the Pacific islands, the hair of the head grows in separate curling tufts, and is capable, by stretching, of considerable elongation. With the Australian the hair of the head is long and coarse, and buckles.

With respect to the hair of the face, or beard, no race of man can be said to be absolutely destitute of it; but with many it is so scanty as even to be deemed by themselves not only not an ornament but even an incumbrance, and therefore often carefully extirpated. With the races of Europe, the Persians, the Arabs, and the Hindus, the beard is more or less abundant. With very inconsiderable exceptions, whether in the Old or New World, scanty beards are the rule. They prevail from the eastern confines of Hindustan to Japan, including the Hindu-Chinese race, the Chinese, the Tartaric tribes, the Malays, the fairer islanders of the Pacific, and all the native Americans, whether red men or Esquimaux.

The few exceptions to the rule of scanty beards, among the races just referred to, are easily reckoned, and, indeed, are sometimes to be seen in juxtaposition to those races with whom the beard is deficient. The Australians have abundant beards, and so have the Papuans and other Austral Negroes living close to, or even among, the Malays and fairer South Sea Islanders, who are almost beardless. Close to the scantily-bearded Japanese are the Kurile Islanders, with large beards,

and altogether an eminently shaggy race. With these may be included the natives of Yesso, the largest of the islands of the northern part of the Japanese Archipelago. The people of this island are a totally different race from the Japanese, and, indeed, but a comparatively recent conquest of the latter. These are the people just now exhibiting in London as curiosities of shagginess, under the designation of the "Hairy men of Yesso." The bare enumeration now given of inferior races with ample beards, in the neighbourhood of superior races with hardly any beards, will be sufficient to satisfy us that the beard is no evidence of vigour or manliness, as those possessed of it would fain have us to believe.

As to the eye, it in a great measure follows, as to colour, the complexion. With the races of ethnological Europe, like the skin and hair, its characteristic is a variety which obtains with no other race of man. We have here the grey, blue, hazel, brown, and black eye; while with most of the other races of man it is either a deep brown or black. With respect to position, the eye is more or less deep-seated, or more or less prominent, properties which do not appear to be characteristics of any particular races. The position of the eye is more characteristic, but neither is it appropriate to any particular race. In the European races and those of Western and Central Asia it is horizontal, while with the Chinese and races of Tartary it lies obliquely in its socket, the inner angle being elevated, while the outer is depressed. This character, however, belongs more or less to other races equally with the Chinese, so that it is not of much value in the discrimination of races.

As to the question of variety of colour in the skin in the races of man, its apportionment is evidently a mystery beyond our reach, just as much as is the variety and distribution of colours in the different species of the same genera of the lower animals. Some have fancied that colour in man depends on climate, or that a powerful sun makes the complexion more or less black, while a weaker one leaves it to improve in fairness in proportion to its feebleness. This popular error arose out of the narrow experience of our ancestors. It is a fact that the races of Southern Europe are generally of darker complexion than those of the north. Dark complexions diminish until we reach the people of Scandinavia, when the fair skin attains its acmé. After this, however, it becomes darker as we leave the sun, up to the polar circle. The Finns are darker than the Norwegians, and the Lapps darker than the Finns, while the Esquimaux are as dark as the Malays whose home is about the equator. The Hindu is of the same black colour

from Cape Comorin to the foot of the Himalaya mountains, and from Peshawar as far as the borders of Assam and Arracan, that is, over 26 degrees of latitude and 24 of longitude. The Tamils of Cape Comorin are certainly not blacker than the pure Hindus of the Punjab and Peshawar. On the western side of the Gulf of Bengal we have the black Hindu, and on the eastern, in the same latitude, and at the same elevation above the sea level, we have the brown Burmese and other Hindu-Chinese races.

The Chinese are of the same brownish-yellow from the fifteenth degree of latitude to the fortieth, neither fairer to the north, nor darker to the south. The Malayan race is of the same brown complexion from Sumatra and Borneo under the equator up to Lucon in the Philippines, extending to the eighteenth degree of north latitude. The fairer Polynesians of the South Pacific are of the same complexion from Rutumah in about the twelfth to the southern extremity of New Zealand in the forty-sixth degree of south latitude. In the same Southern Pacific we have two distinct races, namely, a Negro, and a non-Negro race, the one black and the other brown, occupying islands in proximity to each other, and in the same parallels of latitude.

On the continent of Australia the native inhabitants are of the same unvarying black, from Cape York, in the eleventh degree of latitude, to Tasmania, in about the forty-third degree. We have here, then, exclusively a black complexion; while in other parts of the world, with corresponding climates, we have respectively, fair, brown, yellow, red, and black complexions.

The red man of America and its islands is, with some mere shades of difference, essentially of the same copper colour from Tierra del Fuego to the confines of the Esquimaux, and from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the Pacific. It is not asserted that he is fairer fifty or sixty degrees from the equator than he is at the equator itself, nor does an elevation 10,000 feet above the sea level make any change in his normal complexion.

Such incontestable facts as those now stated dispose at once of the hypothesis of climate being the cause of colour in the human complexion. If, then, the variety of colour be not the effect of climate, from what cause is it derived? This is one of the inscrutable mysteries of nature, which we cannot solve any more than we can account for the varieties of colour in the species of the lower animals. The lion and the tiger are two species of the same natural family, sometimes seen in the very same forest, and they are readily distinguished by their pelt or fur, but by no other means; for, deprived of it, they are not

distinguishable either by external form or anatomical structure, nor do they materially differ in size or habits. We cannot tell why the one should be uniformly fulvid and the other invariably striped. One species of fox is black, another white, a third grey, and a fourth rufous ; but we can assign no reason for these differences, which make the only essential ones between them. The polar bear is always white, while no other bear ever is so. The swan of Europe is always white, and a black swan was long thought to be a bird contrary to nature ; but the swans of Australia are all black ; and a native of Australia might have fancied a white swan as unnatural as a native of Europe once did a black one. Nature has made colour a distinction of species in the lower animals, and it has done the same, although less definitely, in the races of man ; and in both cases we are equally ignorant of the grounds on which it has done so.
